



September 16, 2015

Dear Parents and Families,

We hope that you and your child have had a wonderful start to the school year.

We are writing today to let you know about some exciting new citywide programs that will be starting in schools as early as this spring and into the next school year and beyond. These programs are part of our commitment to making New York City the best urban school district in the country, and providing every student with equal opportunity and a path to college and a meaningful career.

Parents are partners in achieving equity and excellence in education, and we hope we'll have your support and collaboration as we bring these new programs to our schools:

- **Universal 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Literacy Support:** Every elementary school will receive support from a reading specialist by the fall of 2018 to ensure that all students are reading on grade level by the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.
- **Algebra for All:** By fall 2021, all students will have access to algebra in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and students will receive support earlier in middle school so they're ready for algebra by 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Research shows that algebra plays a key role in children's future success: students who successfully pass algebra no later than 9<sup>th</sup> grade are more likely to graduate from high school and attend and graduate from college.
- **AP for All:** Every high school student will have access to a range of Advanced Placement courses by the fall of 2021, with the first new courses starting next fall. This will ensure that all students have a chance to do college-level work in high school and pave a path to college.
- **College Access for All:** All high schools will have the resources to provide each student with support through the college process, for example: help completing applications, applying for financial aid, and visiting colleges. Every middle school student will be able to visit a college campus.

- **Computer Science for All:** By 2025, every student will receive computer science education in elementary, middle, and high school. Students will learn coding, robotics, web design, and more. Computer science courses will help foster teamwork, problem solving, critical thinking, and creativity. This training will ensure that our students are prepared for the jobs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy.
- **Single Shepherd:** Every student in grades 6-12 in District 7 in the South Bronx and District 23 in Brownsville, Brooklyn, will be paired with a dedicated counselor who will support them through graduation and college enrollment. If we see evidence of success in these two districts, we'll grow this program to support more high-needs students and communities.
- **District-Charter Learning Partnerships:** We're launching a new partnership program for district and charter schools to share best practices and improve teaching and learning across the system.

You can find more information on these programs including the academic research they're based on at <http://nyc.gov/excellenceforall>. Please take a moment to go online to learn more about the work we're doing to increase equity and excellence at all schools. We will also continue to provide updates on these new programs as they are implemented across the City.

As the school year gets underway, we'd also like to encourage you to get involved at your student's school. Our principals, teachers, and school staff look forward to seeing you.

Sincerely,



Mayor Bill de Blasio



Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña